

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This is a Response to the Office Action mailed December 17, 2008 (hereinafter the "Office Action"), in which a three (3) month Shortened Statutory Period for Response has been set, due to expire March 17, 2009. Fifty-two (52) claims, including twelve (12) independent claims, were paid for in the application. Claims 22 and 29 are amended upon entry of this amendment. Claims 1-21, 27, 37, and 41-49 have been canceled previously without prejudice. Claims 33-36, 38-40, and 50-52 have been withdrawn previously. No new matter has been added to the application. The Director is authorized to charge any additional fees due by way of this Amendment, or credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 19-1090. Claims 22-26 and 28-32 are pending in the application.

Rejection of Claims 22-26 and 28

Claims 22-26 and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Publication No. 2003/0064774 filed by Fujimoto et al. (hereinafter "Fujimoto") in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,077,332 issued to Verschuur et al. (hereinafter "Verschuur"). In light of the amendment to independent claim 22, Applicants respectfully request for the Examiner's reconsideration and further examination of the claims in view of the remarks below.

As amended, claim 22 recites, *inter alia*, a playing card reader comprising ... "a computer-readable medium storing a mapping that uniquely identifies playing cards based on a random distribution of conductive material carried by each of the playing cards, wherein at least one of a number of aspects of the conductive material carried by each playing card corresponds to a respective rank or suit of the respective playing card, the number of aspects of the conductive material including the number and size of the conductive material." The amendment to claim 22 corresponds to the embodiment described, for example, in the paragraph beginning at page 8, line 28, of the specification as filed.

With respect to claim 22, the Office Action admits that "Fujimoto is silent in regards to uniquely identifies cards based on a random distribution of conductive material carried by each of the cards." Office Action, page 3. On the other hand, the Office Action states

that Verschuur “teaches a media verification system wherein unique conductive pattern is hidden from sight and differs from other conductivity patterns applied to other printable articles in an effectively random manner. Verschuur further teaches that the print media or printable articles can be tags, tickets, labels, cards, coupons, currency, forms, game pieces, document and other article identifies by or subject to printing.” Office Action, page 3.

As admitted in the Office Action, it is clear that Fujimoto does not disclose, teach or suggest “a computer-readable medium storing a mapping that uniquely identifies playing cards based on a random distribution of conductive material carried by each of the playing cards,” let alone disclosing, teaching or suggesting “wherein at least one of a number of aspects of the conductive material carried by each playing card corresponds to a respective rank or suit of the respective playing card, the number of aspects of the conductive material including the number and size of the conductive material.” It is respectfully submitted that Verschuur does not supply this teaching that is missing from Fujimoto.

Verschuur is directed to a media verification system that applies a unique conductivity pattern to printable articles to provide a signature for later verification of the authenticity of the printable articles. Verschuur discloses a printable article having a printed pattern of conductive material in the form of multiple rows with information encoded in one or more of these rows (col. 12, line 58 – col. 13, line 46; Figure 4), a single barcode (col. 13, lines 47-58; Figure 5), a barcode with crossbars 94 (col. 13, line 59 – col. 14, line 8; Figure 6), or a single thin line 100 (col. 14, lines 14-31; Figure 8). Verschuur also discloses a pattern of conductive ink printed onto a magnetic stripe on a magnetically striped card (col. 15, lines 50-60; Figure 10) that may contain wavelike patterns (col. 16, line 55 – col. 17, line 13; Figures 13, 14A-14B and 15A-15D).

There is, however, no disclosure, teaching or suggestion in Verschuur of utilizing a random distribution of conductive material carried by each playing card to uniquely identify the playing card, wherein at least one of a number of aspects of the conductive material carried by each playing card, such as number and size of the conductive material, corresponds to a respective rank or suit of the respective playing card. Even assuming Verschuur discloses a random distribution of conductive material carried by each playing card, there is still no teaching

or suggestion that at least one of the number and size of the randomly distributed conductive material carried by each playing card corresponds to the respective rank or suit of the respective playing card. Although Verschuur discloses card-identifying information can be encoded in one or more of the rows 80, 82, 84, 86 of conductive ink or in the barcode 92, this is not the same as or equivalent to having the number and/or size of the randomly distributed conductive material correspond to the rank or suit of the respective playing card. Besides, by the very nature, neither printed rows of conductive ink nor a barcode can be considered as randomly distributed conductive material.

Thus, Fujimoto and Verschuur, either individually or in combination, fail to disclose a combination of the limitations recited in amended claim 22. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that amended claim 22 is patentable over Fujimoto in view of Verschuur.

Claims 23-26 and 28 are believed to be patentable over the cited reference because of their respective dependency on patentable independent claim 22, and because of the additional limitations recited by those claims. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claims 22-26 and 28 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn.

Rejection of Claims 29-30 and 32

Claims 29-30 and 32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fujimoto in view of Verschuur and U.S. Patent No. 6,346,044 issued to McCrea, Jr. (hereinafter "McCrea"). In light of the amendment to independent claim 29, Applicants respectfully request for the Examiner's reconsideration and further examination of the claims in view of the remarks below.

As amended, claim 29 recites, *inter alia*, a system for wirelessly monitoring wagering and play of a playing card game at a gaming table using playing cards and wagering chips each bearing conductive material, the system comprising ... "a computing system coupled to receive data from both the wireless card reader and the wireless chip reader, the computer system including a computer-readable medium storing a mapping that uniquely identifies playing cards based on a random distribution of conductive material carried by each of the playing cards, wherein at least one of a number of aspects of the conductive material carried by each playing card corresponds to a respective rank or suit of the respective playing card, the number of

aspects of the conductive material including the number and size of the conductive material.” The amendment to claim 29 corresponds to the embodiment described, for example, in the paragraph beginning at page 8, line 28, of the specification as filed.

With respect to claim 29, the Office Action admits that “Fujimoto is silent in regards to uniquely identifies cards based on a random distribution of conductive material carried by each of the cards; and a chip reader having at least one wireless transmitter and receiver coupled to a plurality of antennas positioned proximate to respective wagering placement areas to electro-magnetically interrogate wagering chips placed at the wager placement areas.” Office Action, page 4. On the other hand, the Office Action states that Verschuur “teaches a media verification system wherein unique conductive pattern is hidden from sight and differs from other conductivity patterns applied to other printable articles in an effectively random manner. Verschuur further teaches that the print media or printable articles can be tags, tickets, labels, cards, coupons, currency, forms, game pieces, document and other article identifies by or subject to printing.” Office Action, page 5. The Office Action also states that McCrea “discloses a chip reader having at least one wireless transmitter and receiver coupled to a plurality of antennas positioned proximate to respective wagering placement areas to electro-magnetically interrogate wagering chips placed at the wager placement areas and a wireless chip reader (col. 8, lines 48-61).” Office Action, page 5.

As admitted in the Office Action, it is clear that Fujimoto does not disclose, teach or suggest “the computer system including a computer-readable medium storing a mapping that uniquely identifies playing cards based on a random distribution of conductive material carried by each of the playing cards,” let alone disclosing, teaching or suggesting “wherein at least one of a number of aspects of the conductive material carried by each playing card corresponds to a respective rank or suit of the respective playing card, the number of aspects of the conductive material including the number and size of the conductive material.” Verschuur fails to remedy the deficiencies of Fujimoto as explained above. For example, among other things, there is no disclosure, teaching or suggestion in Verschuur of utilizing a random distribution of conductive material carried by each playing card to uniquely identify the playing card, wherein at least one of a number of aspects of the conductive material carried by each playing card, such as number

and size of the conductive material, corresponds to a respective rank or suit of the respective playing card.

McCrea is directed to a jackpot system for live card games based upon game play wagering. McCrea discloses a chip reader that has at least one wireless transmitter and receiver coupled to a plurality of antennas positioned proximate to respective wagering placement areas to interrogate wagering chips placed at the wager placement areas and a wireless chip reader (col. 8, lines 48-61). McCrea nevertheless fails to remedy the deficiencies of Fujimoto and Verschuur with respect to claim 29. For example, among other things, there is no disclosure, teaching or suggestion in McCrea of a computer-readable medium storing a mapping that uniquely identifies playing cards based on a random distribution of conductive material carried by each of the playing cards, wherein at least one of a number of aspects of the conductive material carried by each playing card corresponds to a respective rank or suit of the respective playing card, the number of aspects of the conductive material including the number and size of the conductive material.

Thus, Fujimoto, Verschuur and McCrea, either individually or in combination, fail to disclose a combination of the limitations recited in amended claim 29. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that amended claim 29 is patentable over Fujimoto in view of Verschuur and McCrea.

Claims 30 and 32 are believed to be patentable over the cited reference because of their respective dependency on patentable independent claim 29, and because of the additional limitations recited by those claims. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claims 29-30 and 32 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn.

Rejection of Claim 31

Claim 31 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fujimoto in view of Verschuur and McCrea, as applied to claim 29 above, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,735,742 issued to French (hereinafter “French”).

French is directed to a gaming table tracking system. French discloses a gaming tracking system having a chip tray and a chip tray reader having at least one wireless transmitter and receiver coupled to a plurality of antennas positioned in the chip tray to interrogate wagering

chips placed at the chip tray, if any, where the chip tray reader is coupled to a computing system to provide data thereto (col. 7, lines 18-30).

As explained above, Fujimoto, Verschuur and McCrea fail to disclose a combination of the recited limitations of amended claim 29. French fails to remedy such deficiencies. For example, among other things, there is no disclosure, teaching or suggestion in McCrea of a computer-readable medium storing a mapping that uniquely identifies playing cards based on a random distribution of conductive material carried by each of the playing cards, wherein at least one of a number of aspects of the conductive material carried by each playing card corresponds to a respective rank or suit of the respective playing card, the number of aspects of the conductive material including the number and size of the conductive material.

Thus, Fujimoto, Verschuur, McCrea and French, either individually or in combination, fail to disclose a combination of the limitations recited in amended claim 29. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that amended claim 29 is patentable over Fujimoto in view of Verschuur and McCrea, and further in view of French.

Claim 31 is believed to be patentable over the cited reference because of its respective dependency on patentable independent claim 29, and because of the additional limitations recited by claim 31. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claim 31 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn.

Conclusion

In light of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims are allowable. Applicants, therefore, respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider this application and timely allow all pending claims. Examiner Rada is encouraged to contact Mr. Han by telephone to discuss the above and any other distinctions between the claims and the applied references, if desired. If the Examiner notes any

informalities in the claims, he is encouraged to contact Mr. Han by telephone to expediently correct such informalities.

Respectfully submitted,
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